

The Kingdom That Shall Crush All Kingdoms

Daniel 2:44-45; Revelation 11:15

August 21, 2022

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Preaching should certainly be directed to converting individual sinners to Jesus Christ. But the goal of the gospel is ultimately to convert entire nations to our great Savior and King—not only Christian individuals, but Christian families and Christian nations. Sadly, that biblical truth is foreign to many who profess Christ today, who do not see that a nation is a moral person that is bound to submit to Christ as King and to His Moral Law even as individuals are to do. God not only judges individuals for sin, but also judges nations and their national leaders for sin (Egypt by means of the plagues for their oppression; Canaanite nations were destroyed for their idolatry and abominations; 2 Kings 17:8,11; Nebuchadnezzar is abased in Daniel 4; each of the kingdoms in Daniel 2 are judged by God and removed until all are removed by Christ's kingdom).

If nations are judged by God for their rebellion against Him and His Moral Law, they can likewise be brought to Christ to repent of national sins, seek God's forgiveness, and submit to Christ as King—this was done by our forefathers in England, Ireland, and Scotland by means of the Solemn League and Covenant (Egypt, Assyria, and Israel will covenant to be Christian nations in the future, Isaiah 19:24-25). In fact, Jesus commanded His ministers to disciple the nations ("Go ye therefore and teach [disciple] all nations" Matthew 28:19). As far as the curse of sin has gone, so far does the grace of God go in deliverance from that curse.

Think of the most hostile nation to Jesus on earth at this time. Jesus will bring to an end that nation's rebellion and by His sovereign power and grace make it a friend and lover of Christ and His kingdom (even Israel). That's our certain hope from our text today. There are three questions to answer today: (1) When Will Christ's Kingdom Overcome the Kingdoms of This World? (2) How Will Christ's Kingdom Overcome the Kingdoms of This World? (3) Is This a Possible or a Certain Victory?

I. When Will Christ's Kingdom Overcome the Kingdoms of This World? Is this a past event or a yet future event?

A. Review

1. Daniel has now explained Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the enormous image composed of different metals (Daniel 2:31-33) and its interpretation (Daniel 2:36-43).

2. No doubt, the part of the dream that most perplexed Nebuchadnezzar was this small stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands, then rolled and struck the mighty image in the feet, toppling the whole image and then grinding the pieces of the image into powder which was blown away. Then he saw this stone grow in size until it became a mountain that filled the whole earth (Daniel 2:34-35—this is the kingdom of Christ, Daniel 2:44; Daniel 7:13-14). Daniel interprets further the meaning of this part of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

B. In seeking to answer the first question, we must understand the meaning of these words: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." The destruction of the kings (kingdoms) is the time given when Christ's kingdom will in history overcome the kingdoms of this world (Revelation 11:15). Let's consider three responses to when this will occur.

1. "In the days of these kings" was realized at Christ's first coming when Jesus laid the foundation of His kingdom through His death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven (at which time Jesus was crowned King at God's right hand, Acts 2:33-36).

a. Since the united Roman Empire conquered the previous territory of Babylon,

Medo/Persia, and Greece, it was in that sense that Rome signified all of the previous hostile kingdoms to Christ's sole dominion.

b. It is certainly true that Jesus was legally crowned King of kings through His death, resurrection, and ascension during the united Roman Empire (the stone was cut out without hands in the past), but the stone in Daniel 2 does not strike legs of iron of the image (during the united Roman Empire), but rather the feet and ten toes of the image at the time of the divided Roman Empire (Daniel 2:34).

2. "In the days of these kings" was realized either at the destruction of Jerusalem by Rome (70 AD; Matthew 16:27-28) or at the time of Constantine and the Treaty of Milan in 313 AD (Sixth Seal Judgment—Revelation 6:12-17).

a. As with the previous position, this one would understand that since the united Roman Empire conquered the territory of the previous kings (kingdoms of Babylon, Medo/Persia, and Greece), it was in that sense that Rome represented all of the previous hostile kingdoms to Christ's sole dominion.

b. There are truths to be appreciated about this position as well. Jesus did manifest the greatness of His kingdom in the destruction of Jerusalem (the first great enemy against Christ and His kingdom) and in raising up Constantine to break the hold that paganism had on the Roman Empire (second great enemy). However, this position also requires the stone to strike the legs of iron—united Rome (which it did not), not the feet and toes of iron and clay—divided Rome (which it did).

3. "In the days of these kings" most agreeably with the text refers to a period of time that was future to Christ, the apostles, the destruction of Jerusalem (70 AD), and the establishment of the Treaty of Milan (313 AD) which all occurred during the period of the legs of iron (united Roman Empire). "In the days of these kings" takes us to a time after united Rome (legs of iron) is divided into feet and toes of iron and clay.

a. Thus, these "kings" are most likely represented by the ten toes (or ten horns—the barbarian kingdoms that formed in Europe and divided the united Roman Empire in the fifth and sixth centuries). This is precisely where the stone of Christ's kingdom struck the image and caused the rest of the image to fall and be destroyed as the enemies of Christ and His kingdom.

b. These 10 kings (that settled in Europe) will yet work together by way of confederation with the centralized civil beast of Revelation (the eighth head that is healed—the United States of Europe) in making war against Christ and His faithful saints (Revelation 17:12-17).

c. When will this occur? It has not yet occurred, for Christ has not yet destroyed the harlot (Revelation 17:16) nor have the 10 kings been crushed by Christ's kingdom. The Reformation was a foretaste, but not the full realization of Christ's victory where all hostility to Christ will be removed from these European kingdoms. This will yet be fully realized in the future. We will have more to say as to more precisely occur, but that will await the exposition of Daniel 7.

II. How Will the Kingdom of Christ Overcome the Kingdoms of This World?

A. Christ's kingdom is different from all other kingdoms of this world. There is no kingdom like the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Just as there is no king like King Jesus (in power, righteousness, justice, love, and mercy), so there is no kingdom like Christ's kingdom.

B. How is Christ's kingdom different from all other kingdoms?

1. The rise of Christ's kingdom is not natural, but supernatural—it is a kingdom that is like a stone that is cut out of a mountain without hands (without human power)—Daniel 2:34,45. Though the kingdom of Christ is in the world (cut from the mountain), it is not of the world (it is cut without hands—its origin is supernatural and of God's power and grace). This supernatural origin of the stone points to the supernatural conception of Jesus Christ, His life, death, resurrection, and ascension to God's right hand to reign as King of kings.

2. Christ's kingdom is essentially spiritual and heavenly in graciously converting

sinner/nations to Jesus Christ (through the gospel) and in bringing them under His lordship to submit to Him and His royal law (John 18:36). Thus, the primary means of subduing and crushing rebellious nations to Christ and His rule is not by military might, but by the great miracle of changing the hearts of sinners so that they willingly bow the knee to Christ as King of kings (Psalm 110:3). As Jesus by His power converts the nations i.e. crushes them (both Israel and Gentile nations)—righteous leaders and constitutions will be established in the nations, declaring that Jesus is King of kings and His righteous law is the supreme law of the land. Civil justice will be used against the wicked, it will be used to defend the righteous and the oppressed (as righteous leaders establish Christ as King of kings, biblical Christianity as the one true religion, and civil laws that are agreeable to God's law).

3. Christ's kingdom is mightier than all other kingdoms—none will be able to resist the power of Christ's kingdom (Daniel 2:44; Psalm 110:5; Psalm 2:8-9; Revelation 19:15-16).

4. Christ's kingdom is universal—it may begin with the ten kingdoms, but it will spread until it conquers all nations (Daniel 2:44; Psalm 72:11; Isaiah 2:2).

5. Christ's kingdom will grow until it fills the whole earth (Daniel 2:35; Matthew 13:31-32). It had a very humble beginning with Jesus and His disciples (mostly fishermen). Christ's kingdom manifests itself throughout history (sometimes more visibly and sometimes less visibly). Even at the beginning of the millennium, Christ's kingdom will not have reached its full growth, for even after striking the image, it will continue to grow until it fills the whole earth (Daniel 2:35).

6. Christ's kingdom shall be forever and ever. It shall never be destroyed and given to others, as the rest were (Daniel 2:44; Revelation 11:15).

III. Is This a Possible or a Certain Victory?

A. Daniel tells the king that God revealed to him in this dream that the stone (Christ's kingdom) would destroy all hostile nations against Christ's kingdom not to declare a possibility, but to make known that this will certainly be realized at God's appointed time (Daniel 2:45).

1. All things have been put under his feet—even wicked nations and rulers for the good of His kingdom (Ephesians 1:22). If King Jesus can subdue me, a sinner, by His grace, He can subdue a nation of sinners to Himself. There is no lack of power in Christ (new creation).

2. What a glorious and precious prophecy the Lord has given to us as we face the tyranny of nations that despise Christ's kingdom of truth, righteousness, justice, love, grace, and power. This prophecy will be realized in history. This truth keeps us from despair and hopelessness. This truth keeps us from trusting in our own strength and our own righteousness. This truth declares that there will be a reward for those who walk in faithfulness to Christ even when the vast multitudes ridicule, mock, despise, and persecute us for standing for that which is indestructible (Christ's kingdom), but will destroy all that stands in its way (whether it is the mighty kingdom of Rome and its persecution, or the church of Rome and its perversion of the truth, or the skepticism of this world in its misuse of science, history, and philosophy against Christ, or whether it is the worldliness/pleasures of this world. All will fall before Christ. Remember our real battle is not against flesh and blood. All these enemies are under His feet.

B. Is there anything too hard for the King Jesus? If Christ will turn the nations from hating the gospel and His righteous commandments, to embracing His gospel by faith alone and loving His commandments, then is there any lack of power on the part of Christ to save us, our children who have fallen away, or even our enemies? Our salvation is not in what we can accomplish with these weak hands. Our salvation (now and for all eternity) is in the almighty hands of King Jesus. All of the kingdoms of this world and all of the false religions of this world will fall before the power of our King.